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SECURITY INFORMATION
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION FROM
FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Economic - Construction materials

DATE OF INFORMATION 1939 - 1953

HOW PUBLISHED Semiweekly newspaper

DATE DIST. 11 Dec 1953

WHERE PUBLISHED Moscow

NO. OF PAGES 4

DATE PUBLISHED 4 Oct 1952

LANGUAGE Russian

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Promyshlennost' Stroitel'nykh Materialov

DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS INDUSTRY SINCE 1939; PLANS FOR 1955

During the postwar period, man-output in the Soviet construction materials industry as a whole increased 81.7 percent over the prewar period. In some branches of the industry, man-output was even greater. In the ceramics industry, it increased 108.9 percent and in the roofing industry 96.7 percent.

In 1951, the construction materials industry doubled its output over 1940. Capital investments in the industry in 1951 were 2.5 times greater than in 1940.

Cement Industry

In 1951, the cement industry produced 2 million tons of cement more than in 1950.

Since the 18th Party Congress in March 1939, large cement plants equipped with 150-cubic-meter kilns and highly productive crushers have been built in various parts of the USSR. The industry increased its output considerably in the Urals, Siberia, the Far East, and Central Asia.

A majority of the old cement plants have undergone changes. Extraction and hauling of limestone in the quarries is now 95 percent mechanized. The old kilns and crushers have been either replaced or reconstructed. During 1952 - 1953, 68 rotary kilns will be reconstructed. By water-cooling the rotary kilns at various intervals, clinker output has been increased 15-20 percent.

Some of the plants began to add granulated cinders to the mixture of raw materials, and this process increased the output of higher grade clinker and resulted in a saving of fuel.

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The industry shipped about one million tons of cement to the Volga-Don Canal construction project.

Ceramics Industry

Before the war, the ceramics industry did not produce ceramic blocks. Now these blocks are produced in the old plants, as well as in two new plants built in Kuchino and Kudinovo.

The industry started mass production of ceramic blocks and ceramic front facing slabs in 1950. In 1952, the industry expects to produce six times as many blocks and slabs as in the previous 2 years.

The industry has increased its output of building faience threefold since 1940.

During the Fourth Five-Year Plan, the ceramics industry was not only re-established and expanded, but underwent considerable changes. A majority of the plants were reconstructed; working operations were mechanized. The Kirov Building Faience Plant installed three conveyers. Vacuum presses replaced the simple auger presses in all plants. Floor slabs are now made on toggle presses, which were unknown in the industry before. In 1940, the industry produced 860,000 square meters of ceramic floor slabs; in 1951, this output was doubled. In 1952, output of ceramic floor slabs will reach 2.6 million square meters.

During recent years, 14 continuous tunnel kilns have been installed and put in operation, and 10 more are now in the construction stage. Only one such kiln was found in the industry in 1940. In a number of plants, products are dried and fired automatically.

The expansion of the ceramics industry created a demand for more highly skilled workers. In 1940, there were 500 engineering and technical workers in the enterprises of Glavstroykeramika (Main Administration of Construction Ceramics); in 1952, this figure rose to 1,200.

Gypsum Industry

Before the war, ready-made wallboard sheets were available only in limited quantities. The product made its appearance in Kiev and Moscow between 1948 and 1949 after the first gypsum wallboard plants started operating in these cities. The Moscow and Kiev plants now also produce gypsum partitioning blocks.

Gypsum wallboard is now manufactured in Moscow, Kiev, Riga, Leningrad, Minsk, and Stalinogorsk. Builders in Rostov, Stalingrad, and Chelyabinsk are expected to get the product in 1952. In 1953, construction of gypsum products plants is to be started in Sverdlovsk, Baku, and Krasnoyarsk.

At present, 400 gypsum partitioning blocks per hour can be made on one machine.

The industry has enormous potential for the future, as indicated by the experiences of the following enterprises.

The Stalinogorsk Gypsum Mine and Stalingorsk Gypsum Plant started operations in 1951. Both extraction in the mine and hauling to the plant are completely mechanized. A conveyer is used to deliver the gypsum from the mine to the plant, which has six boilers of 180,000-ton [total] capacity.

In September 1951 the Pavshino Gypsum Wallboard Plant (Moskovskaya Oblast) had a daily output of about 14,000 square meters of wallboard; in September 1952, this figure had risen to about 19,000 square meters daily.

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By opening new plants and further intensifying its operations at existing enterprises, the industry was able to expand its output of wallboard from 6.31 million to 13.7 million square meters in a single year.

Brick Industry

During the Fourth Five-Year Plan, the brick industry underwent an expansion program which, in significance, equaled that of a 10-year period. Plant appearance, as well as ideas on equipment capacity, changed considerably.

In 1952, 60 percent of the brick will be produced by mechanized plants operating the year around. During 1950 - 1952, the industry put 46 tunnel and 13 chamber dryers in operation. Clay extraction is now 88 percent mechanized, and hauling is 80 percent mechanized. Between 1948 and 1952, the industry increased the amount of its excavating equipment threefold. During these same 4 years, the industry installed vacuum units and steam-wetting equipment. In the plants subordinate to the republic ministries of construction materials industry, there are now 142 steam-wetting units. The plants of Glavkirpich (Main Administration of the Brick Industry) are all equipped with these units.

Many plants increased their brick output per cubic meter of ring kiln. Previously, this output did not exceed 700-800 bricks. Today, many plants are able to get 2,000 or more bricks per cubic meter of kiln.

The Krasnodar Brick Plant started drying brick by a new method which considerably increased the output per square meter of seasonal drying area. The idea was expanded to chamber dryers. The Krasnodar plant now dries brick in 48 hours, and Novosibirsk Brick Plant No 1 in 36 hours. The average drying time throughout the industry has been reduced to 99 hours, as compared with 195 hours in 1940.

Several brick plants increased their daily brick output from the production line. The Nizhne-Kotel', Nikol'sk, Vorontsovo, Lisikhinskiy, Alma-Ata Brick Plant No 3, and other brick plants now get 100,000 or more bricks daily from a production line.

Several brick plants on the all-Union level have converted to manufacturing brick by the dry press method.

The silicate brick industry has also expanded rapidly. In 1940, output per press amounted to 8,600 bricks; in 1952, this figure rose to 16,800 bricks.

Two operations are still done manually in the brick industry: setting and removing brick.

Glass Industry

This industry was one of the first branches of the construction materials industry to re-establish itself to the prewar level. By 1950, it was fully able to meet building demands for window glass, had initiated a modernization program, and had started to improve the quality and variety of its products.

Between 1948 and 1951, a major part of the industry reconstructed its vertical drawing machinery, burners, and regenerators, improved its hydromechanics, organized the feeding of glass mass into machines as a separate operation, converted to improved refractories, and made the regulation of technological processes automatic. As a result, the quality of glass was improved and glass output per meter of tank furnace rose, on an average, 50-60 percent over the prewar level.

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Slate Industry

After the war, the slate industry expanded by opening a new Georgian SSR plant, as well as new plants in Baku, Yashkino, Kuvasay, Krichevo, Krasnoyarsk, and other localities.

In 1951, slate output reached 685 million slabs, or 3.3 times the prewar level. In the same year, the output of asbestos pipe was 4 times the prewar level. This expansion in the production of slate and asbestos pipe was achieved without constructing any new plants in 1951.

By stepping-up machine speeds, during 1950 - 1951 the average hourly output from slate slab-forming machines was increased 25 percent over the prewar level in 19 of the 31 plants subordinate to Glavshifer (Main Administration of the Slate Industry). The slate industry put eight additional plants in operation; previously, it had expected to put 15 plants in operation. By putting these eight additional plants in operation, the industry expects in 1953 to produce an additional 150 million slate slabs over the amount it originally expected to produce.

Standard House Fabricating Industry

Between 1940 and 1952, 29 standard house fabricating plants produced 12 different types of housing in quantities sufficient for 920,000 inhabitants. In 1951 alone, sufficient housing was produced for 250,000 inhabitants.

During recent years, production of the "MM" type house has been increased considerably. The industry produces this type of house without walls. The walls are made by the consumer from local materials where the house is built.

Plans for 1955

In the Fifth Five-Year Plan, the production of construction materials is expected to be more than double that of the previous 5-year period. The production of cement, brick, slate, and polarized glass is expected to be increased even more.

Special emphasis will be put on producing higher grade ceramics, gypsum, partitioning and facing products and structures made from concrete and reinforced concrete.

The reinforced concrete products and structures industry is a new branch of the construction materials industry being established in the USSR. Two large reinforced concrete structure plants in Moscow and Lyubertsy will start operations in 1952. Between 1952 and 1955, this branch of the construction materials industry expects to put 22 new plants in operation.

Together with expanding existing quarries in the Fifth Five-Year Plan, large rayon quarries will be organized which will be mechanized to extract and process stone, rubble stone, gravel, and sand. During 1952 - 1955, Glavnerud (Main Administration of Nonmetallic Ores) alone will reconstruct 22 existing enterprises within its system and will build an additional 20 new enterprises having a capacity of 250,000-500,000 cubic meters of finished products per year.

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